

For 35 years I owned and operated a market research firm. One of the primary research interviewing tools was the telephone interview. Over the years I have seen the use, abuse and misuse of Telemarketing slowly but surely erode the use of this market research tool. People who were called by telemarketers, rather than bonified market research interviewers, were misled, lied to, basically told that they were not being solicited or their names used...this was a lie. And the hours that the calls took place were thoughtless and uncaring. Market Research always maintained a very strict calling time and screening sequence-- no calls after 9:00pm and always asked if a qualified respondent had the time to be interviewed.

Because of the damage Telemarketing has managed to do to the interviewing tool, it is very seldomly used today because no one believes the interviewers any more. It is possible that the "do not call" may reestablish the legitimacy of this very valuable public opinion research tool. Necessarily to work well and to be effective, the "do not call" program must have teeth to accomplish the legitimacy. Making it less so will not accomplish anything -- as it is, the calls still come through from many charities -- some of which sound to be for bogus charitable organizations. and Soon you will see the success rate of these fund raisers diminish -- for the phone should be used as it was designed -- for emergencies and to make important calls to family, friends and for needed services. And that would apply to all phones--including cell!